

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002315

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/WE, EUR/RPM, EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [GR](#) [IT](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: ITALIAN MOD ON NATO COMMAND STRUCTURE

REF: ATHENS 1723

CLASSIFIED BY: A/DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION THOMAS COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS
1.5(B), (D)

1. (C) ITALIAN DEFENSE MINISTER ANTONIO MARTINO IS ADAMANT THAT ANY NATO COMMAND STRUCTURING PLANS SHOULD MAKE SENSE BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND OPERATIONALLY, ACCORDING TO FRANCESCO TRUPIANO, MARTINO'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR. DURING A MAY 23 DISCUSSION ON OTHER MATTERS, TRUPIANO TOLD POL-MIL COUNSELOR THAT MARTINO HAD AGREED TO THE PROPOSAL TO MOVE AIRSOUTH FROM ITALY TO TURKEY BECAUSE OF HIGH-LEVEL USG REQUESTS TO HIM PERSONALLY, EVEN THOUGH HE COULD NOT SEE THE OPERATIONAL OR ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE MOVE. IT WAS A "PAINFUL" CONCESSION, TRUPIANO SAID, THAT RAN COUNTER TO ITALY'S NATIONAL INTERESTS AND MARTINO'S CONSERVATIVE (U. OF CHICAGO) ECONOMICS TRAINING. MARTINO WOULD NOT BE AS SUPPORTIVE OF OTHER COMMAND STRUCTURING PROPOSALS THAT MADE LITTLE MILITARY, ECONOMIC OR OPERATIONAL SENSE, TRUPIANO SAID.

2. (C) FOR THAT REASON, MARTINO OPPOSES THE IDEA OF RELOCATING ITALY'S ONLY COMBINED AIR COMMAND CENTER (CAOC) TO SPAIN, TRUPIANO SAID. AS CURRENTLY CONFIGURED, THE CAOC GIVES HUNGARY AND ITALY STRATEGIC COVERAGE OF THE BALKANS FROM TWO ANGLES. THIS ADVANTAGE WOULD BE LOST BY A MOVE WEST TO SPAIN, TRUPIANO EXPLAINED.

3. (C) ITALY ALSO SEES NO BENEFIT FROM A CAOC IN GREECE, WHICH WOULD IN EFFECT GIVE GREECE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OVER TURKISH AIRSPACE. THIS WOULD NOT BE OFFSET BY MOVING AIRSOUTH TO TURKEY BECAUSE AIRSOUTH CONSISTS OF A COMMAND STRUCTURE WITH LITTLE OPERATIONAL EFFECT, ACCORDING TO TRUPIANO. GREECE WOULD STILL HAVE CONTROL OVER TURKISH AIRSPACE, WHICH MIGHT WELL PROMPT TURKEY TO INSIST ON HAVING A CAOC OF ITS OWN.

4. (C) COMMENT. WHILE HE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY RAISE GREECE'S PROPOSAL (REFTEL) TO MOVE NAVSOUTH FROM NAPLES TO GREECE (AND NEITHER DID WE), TRUPIANO DID REMARK THAT, AFTER ITALY'S COOPERATION ON THE AIRSOUTH MOVE, THE GOI WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY OTHER PROPOSALS THAT WOULD FURTHER DIMINISH NATO'S PRESENCE IN ITALY. END COMMENT.
SKODON

NNNN

2003ROME02315 - Classification: CONFIDENTIAL